



COPTIC ORTHODOX
PATRIARCHATE



DIOCESE OF MISSISSAUGA,
Vancouver and Western Canada



Pastoral Letter From His Grace Bishop Mina
The Feast of the Nayrouz - Coptic Year (Year 1737 of the Martyrs)

September 11, 2020

“You crown the year with Your goodness, And Your paths drip *with* abundance.”

Psalm 65:11

Dear Beloved in Christ,

I pray that you are safe and well.

September is a month of new beginnings. During this month, on September 11th, we celebrate the Feast of Nayrouz, the Coptic New Year, and we celebrate the beginning of the new school year for all ages. May our prayer be for the Lord to Bless the Crown of this Year with His Goodness and may He continue to protect and guide us through this time of pandemic and grant safety and success to each of our children, youth and young adults as they resume their academic journeys.

We know that God always showers us with His countless blessings and most recently we experienced this as we resumed the in-person celebration of the sacraments of our Church together in one spirit since June 12, 2020. We chant with King David and say, “The LORD has done great things for us, *And* we are glad.” (**Psalm 126:3**) We truly have been full of joy as we resumed celebrating the Divine Liturgies, the sacrament of Baptism and Holy Matrimony among other services. Your efforts and support have made our reopening a great success for all of us. Thank you for your great love for the church and for your continued cooperation.

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, is still a significant issue as we see cases rising again. Recently, three non-Coptic Orthodox places of worship, two in the Greater Toronto Area and one in Calgary, Alberta, experienced outbreaks as a result of congregants spreading the virus to others in attendance. As schools resume and as we enter the upcoming flu season, **our main role and responsibility is to continue to be hyper vigilant and compliant with all Provincial Safety Protocols and ensure that we take our time to double check all our responses to the screening questions when we register for services.** Also, if you are in doubt of how you are feeling on the day of your church attendance, we ask you to take the more safe approach and choose staying home to ensure that there is no accidental spread of COVID-19 until you feel better.

Let us continue to work together through the challenges that COVID-19 presents for all of us to ensure the well-being of the community at large and to ensure that we keep everyone in the services safe.

I pray for your continued safety and good health, both physically and spiritually, in all your days.

God Bless You,

Bishop Mina,
Bishop of the Diocese of
Mississauga, Vancouver and Western Canada